

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 341
By Jones U

A RESOLUTION designating April 17-23, 2005, as "Minority Cancer Awareness Week" in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, the week of April 17-23, 2005, is the observance of "National Minority Cancer Awareness Week"; and

WHEREAS, this observance is a nationwide opportunity to convey the message that the burden of cancer falls much heavier on some segments of the nation's population than on others; many people, especially racial and ethnic minorities and the medically underserved, are dying because they do not know about cancer prevention and cannot afford or do not have access to cancer screening and treatment; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Cancer Society's publication, *Cancer Facts & Figures 2005*, African Americans have the highest death rate from all cancer sites combined – including lung, colon, breast, prostate, and cervical cancers – of all racial or ethnic groups in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the death rate from cancer among African American males is 1.4 times higher than that among white males, and for African American females, it is 1.2 times higher than for white females; African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Asian American and Pacific Islander men, as well as African American and American Indian and Alaska Native women, have lower five-year survival rates than non-Hispanic whites; and

WHEREAS, African Americans have the highest death rate from colon cancer of any racial or ethnic group in the United States and are less likely to have colon cancer diagnosed in the earliest most treatable stage; for this reason, their survival is not as good as other racial groups; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, an estimated 145,290 new cases of colon cancer will be diagnosed in the United States; of these new cancer cases, 104,950 will be colon cancer and 40,340 will be rectal cancer; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 56,290 deaths due to colon cancer are expected to occur in 2005, accounting for about 10 percent of cancer deaths this year in the United States; and

WHEREAS, colon cancer is the second most common cancer among African American women and the third most common cancer among African American men; and

WHEREAS, the incidence rate for invasive cervical cancer, which is largely preventable by screening, is four times higher among Vietnamese women compared to all Asian American and Pacific Islander populations combined; Hispanic/Latino men and women have the highest prevalence of no leisure-time physical activity; and

WHEREAS, contributing factors to these disparities include little or no health insurance, poverty, lack of access to health information and services, language barriers, and low literacy rates; efforts to overcome these factors and to close the cancer gap must involve the commitment of healthcare and medical communities and the general population to work together to that end; and

WHEREAS, the American Cancer Society is committed to helping minority and medically underserved communities, survivors, and caregivers overcome these disparities not only during National Minority Cancer Awareness Week but throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we join with the American Cancer Society and other involved national and local groups to express our strong support for the initiatives to reduce and ultimately eliminate the disparities in the rate of cancer incidence between minority and medically underserved segments of our population and the rest of our citizenry; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby designate April 17-23, 2005, as "Minority Cancer Awareness Week" in Tennessee and urge all of the citizens of this State to take steps to heighten their understanding of cancer and cancer prevention.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.